



SAFETY NET-WORKS

DECEMBER 2023

CHRISTMAS SAFETY EDITION

www.safercommunitiesScotland.org

Independent Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group - Submit your views

As we reported in last month's Safety NETworks newsletter, following the publication of a [review of Scotland's approach to antisocial behaviour \(ASB\)](#), the Scottish Government announced an independent working group to address the issue. The group will be co-chaired by Lorraine Gillies, Chief Officer of the Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN) & [Children & Young People's Centre for Justice](#) Director Fiona Dyer.

The report and working group follows on from significant work by the SCSN over the past few years on looking at taking a new approach to anti-social behaviour.

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- **2020** – SCSN hold event around 'a new dialogue for ASB' and publish research.
- **2021** – The former Minister for Community Safety, Ash Regan MSP, asked the Scottish Community Safety Network and the Scottish Government to undertake a review of antisocial behaviour
- **2022** – Engagement sessions with a representative cross-section of stakeholders in Scotland held by the Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN) and the Scottish Government (SG)
- **2023** – 'Reviewing Scotland's Approach to ASB' report published and working group announced.

The Independent Working Group is seeking submissions & views on anti-social behaviour in Scotland, including on approaches to address this issue. You can submit your views to the Independent Working Group at asbconsultation@gov.scot

Local Government Information Unit report paint's bleak picture for Scottish Councils

The SCSN is concerned by [New research](#) from the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) Scotland which reveals that nearly a quarter of Scottish councils fear they will not be able to balance their budgets in the 2024/25 financial year.

This is despite the fact that every single council in Scotland plans to cut spending on services in the next financial year, with around two-thirds of respondents cutting spending on education, parks and leisure, and business support.

Alongside planned cuts, nearly all (97%) said that they would be increasing fees and charges, and nine in ten (89%) that they would be spending reserves.

The Scottish Government has been warned that it is only a matter of time before a council declares bankruptcy.

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SCSN delighted to welcome latest new members!

The SCSN is delighted to welcome the latest major new members to our Network. The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) have come on board to add ever greater levels of expertise, knowledge exchange & partnership working opportunities within the Scottish Community Safety Network!



Latest SCSN Consultation Response Published

We recently published our response to the Scottish Government's Police (Ethics, Conduct & Scrutiny) (Scotland) Bill Consultation.

You can read our consultation in full on our website [here](#).

Big Changes coming at the SCSN in 2024!

New year presents an opportunity for renewal for all of us & for the SCSN, the new year of 2024 is going to be a big one!

Along with engaging Third Sector Lab to design a new website, we'll also be rebranding!

Following Consultation with our Members & approval of our Board, we'll be rebranding as Safer Communities Scotland.

We expect to be ready to officially launch our new Safer Communities Scotland brand & website come April 2024! Further updates will be provided every month until then.

Question of the Month

November Results

Our Question of the Month for November was based on our Climate Crisis and Community Safety themed newsletter.

If you missed it, you can still listen to our Safer Communities Scotland Podcast episode with Stuart Stevens, Deputy Chief Officer of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, where we discussed how climate change is already impacting on community safety & how it will continue to in future.

We asked:

"Do you believe that your local authority is taking the climate crisis seriously & is planning/preparing adequately for climate adaptation?"

- 13% said Yes (2 votes)
- 74% said No (11 votes)
- 13% said Not Sure (2 votes)

Question of the Month December 2023

Our Question of the Month for December relates to our Safer Communities Scotland Podcast on product safety - & Christmas Safety theme.

We're asking:

"Since 2020 how many fatal fires have been linked to e-bikes across the UK?"

Take part in our Poll [here](#).

You can find information on eBike & eScooter Safety from the OPSS on page 7.

Safer Communities Scotland Podcast

Sarah Smith OBE, Deputy Chief Executive,
Office for Product Safety & Standards



For our December Safer Communities Scotland Podcast, we were delighted to speak with Sarah Smith OBE, Deputy CEO of the Office for Product Safety & Standards.

Sarah leads the UK Government's approach to product regulation and market surveillance, and legal metrology, including administering new sovereign functions such as designating standards and operating regulatory approvals processes and leading the programme on ports and borders interventions.

Our National Development Officer Kevin Chase spoke to Sarah about all things Product Safety, including enforcement, online market places and shopping safely at Christmas.

You can listen to this episode on YouTube [here](#).

Listen on Spotify/Anchor [here](#).

What we say and how we say it matters to our safety

By Lorraine Gillies, SCSN
CEO

First published in 1919
Magazine



I'm the Chief Executive Officer of the Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN). Ours is a vital organisation, working in the background to support Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and others tasked with keeping you, me, and our communities safe.

We need your help to change the common parlances that reinforce the imagery and ideas we hold about what makes us safe. I believe we have an opportunity to change how we talk about justice in Scotland.

In this piece, I share my thoughts about what we HEAR, what we REMEMBER, and the influence of NARRATORS in community safety.

I think the language we use, the tone and context, influences behaviours and shapes society. What we say we are, we sometimes become.

THINGS WE HEAR

We are familiar with the depressingly dehumanising language used to describe desperate people crossing the English Channel. "A swarm of people coming across the Mediterranean" ([David Cameron](#), 2015), "a hurricane of migrants" that will be "uncontrolled and unimaginable" ([Suella Braverman](#), 2023). We've been warned of "invasion" by the "illegals" and the need to "process" them – like packets of peas in a factory – with greater efficiency. These are corrosive, populist labels, deliberately used to simplify complexity, to 'other' and stigmatise, and distance the humanity of the issue in favour of economics and politics. But we hear the same rhetoric inland – away from the deadly shorelines – closer to home.

Read this article in full on our website [here](#).

Crime falls by more than half since 2008

Crime levels have dropped by more than half since 2008-09, according to the latest Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS).

The 2021-22 official statistics show that people feel safer in their communities, with the proportion of those experiencing the types of crime covered in the survey at an historic low.

The survey of around 5,600 adults across Scotland estimates that since 2008-09:

- the volume of crime, including incidents not reported to police, has fallen by 53%
- the proportion of people experiencing crime has fallen from one in five (20.4%) to around one in 10 (10.0%)
- violent crime has decreased by nearly three-fifths (58%)

- property crime is down by 51%
- the proportion of people who feel safe walking home alone after dark has increased to more than three-quarters (76%) from two-thirds (66%)

Those who took part in the survey were asked about their experiences of violent crime and property crime, including personal theft, other household theft and vandalism.

They were also asked about their perceptions of crime, policing and the justice system. Most adults expressed confidence in the effectiveness of their local police, including their ability to handle incidents and solve crimes. Nearly half (49%) said police in their local area do an excellent or good job, compared with 55% in the last SCJS in 2019-20.

Read more [here](#).

Reducing domestic homicides and suicides

A new approach aimed at reducing domestic abuse-related homicides and suicides has received overwhelming backing.

The proposals for a Domestic Homicide and Suicide Review Model would help identify what lessons can be learned and applied following the death of a partner, ex-partner, or child where abuse is suspected. Ministers hope that this will ultimately lead to fewer such deaths.

Nine out of 10 people who took part in a consultation – including those with direct

experience of domestic abuse and bereavement – backed the Scottish Government's plans.

There was also substantial support for the inclusion in the Model of cases involving violent-resistant homicide, where the victim kills the perpetrator of abuse.

The Model will now be developed by the Scottish Government's Domestic Homicide and Suicide Review Taskforce, Model Development Subgroup and Task and Finish Groups.

Read more [here](#).

Behaviour in Scottish schools: research report 2023

The Scottish Government commissioned the Scottish Centre for Social Research to conduct a fifth wave of the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research (BISSR) which was first undertaken in 2006. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the 2020 wave of BISSR was postponed, with the result that there was a seven year gap between the fourth wave of BISSR, conducted in 2016, and this iteration of the study. The research in 2023 explored the headteachers', teachers' and support staff

members' views of relationships and behaviour in publicly-funded mainstream schools, as well as the views of key local authority representatives across Scotland.

The overall aim of this study was to provide a robust and clear picture of relationships and behaviour in publicly-funded mainstream schools and of current policy and approaches for supporting relationships and behaviour.

You can read the report in full on the Scottish Government website [here](#).

Survey: Experiencing Image Based Sexual Abuse in Scotland

This survey is part of a doctoral research project being conducted at Glasgow Caledonian University to explore **victim-survivors' experiences with non-consensual taking, creating, sharing, threatening to share, & receiving intimate images in Scotland**. With intimate they mean any nude, semi-nude, private, sexual, sexualised, or other images that may be experienced as an intrusion or violation.

This includes:

- Your image was **taken without your consent** (e.g. in a private or public space, filmed up your skirt or down your cleavage, when engaging in a consensual sexual act, during a sexual assault, you were pressured or coerced to take an image etc.)
- Your image was **created without your consent** (e.g. using Photoshop or AI software including 'deepfakes', screenshotting images without permission etc.)
- Your image was **shared without your consent** (e.g. uploaded online including websites and social media, sent on via messaging apps such as Whatsapp, shown to someone else, printed to be shared as physical copies etc.)
- Someone **threatened to share** your image (regardless of whether the image actually existed)

- You **received or had to look at an unwanted image** you did not consent to (e.g. unsolicited 'dick pics', unwanted pornographic material etc.)

These behaviours are often referred to as image-based abuse but you might have different language for what you experienced.

The researchers would like to hear more about your experience of these behaviours, how it may have affected you, whether you spoke to someone about this, and whether or not you reported this to the police.

The survey is open to everyone in Scotland. You must be at least 16 years old and living in Scotland to take part. We particularly welcome the voices of diverse gender identities and sexualities.

The survey is anonymous, you are not required to provide any identifying information to take part. The answers provided will be used for research purposes only.

The survey is expected to last about 10 minutes. After completing the survey and submitting your responses, it will not be possible to remove these from the collected data as we will be unable to identify your specific responses.

Find out more/take part [here](#).

Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

The Scottish Government's Slavery and Human Trafficking statement outlines the strategies and actions taken by the Scottish Government to identify, prevent and mitigate slavery and human trafficking in our own operations and supply chains.

In his Foreword, First Minister Humza Youssaf said:

"Human trafficking takes place in every region of the world. It is an appalling abuse of human rights, including the right to liberty and security, the right to be free from slavery, and the right to be free from gendered violence.

This is the Scottish Government's first Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement. It underpins our commitment to ensuring that slavery and human trafficking in any form is eradicated from the modern, open Scotland we are building. We each have a vital role to play, including the public sector, and I commit to reviewing this Statement annually to ensure the Scottish Government is transparent in its efforts to combat this sickening crime.

The Scottish Government is committed to delivering an inclusive Scotland that protects, respects and fulfils internationally-recognised human rights."

You can read the full document [here](#).

ALL I (DON'T) WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS.... STAYING SAFE THIS CHRISTMAS



For one famous boy, all he wanted for Christmas was his two front teeth so he could wish us 'Merry Christmas!' We all have our own wishes for Christmas, and the kids will have sent off their letter to Santa hoping their Christmas dreams come true.

With the Cost of Living Crisis ongoing and budgets stretched, 'Santa' might be finding it harder than usual to give kids everything they want. But there's things none of us want, especially not Santa, and that's products that might put kids or families in danger.

So here, we take a look at some tips for shopping safely and other things we can do to make sure we stay safe this Christmas.

RoSPA: Top Tips for a Safe & Merry Christmas

Christmas can be a busy and fun time – but it's vital to keep some basic safety advice in mind, especially when shopping for gifts online.

Buying toys:

- Always use reputable retailers, ideally with a high street presence.
- If the price is 'too good to be true', it probably isn't a legitimate product.

Before giving the present, check for recalls at: www.gov.uk/product-safety-alerts-reports-recalls

- For toys look for a CE, UKCA or UKNI mark. Check for warnings to ensure the toy is age appropriate and suitable for young children.
- When buying gifts for older children and adults, consider whether young children could get access to the products. For example, small high strength [magnets](#) may look very appealing to young children, and water beads, which are very small when dry, can easily be lost then found by little hands later. If either of these items are swallowed, they can cause serious internal injuries.

RoSPA

accidents don't
have to happen

- For more toy safety advice, visit: www.rospa.com/policy/home-safety/advice/product/toy-safety

Purchasing other gifts:

- Special care should be taken when shopping online, especially from online marketplaces where products may be listed by sellers outside of the UK. Always look for details of who is selling the item and where they are located, as goods from outside the UK may not adhere to the same safety standards.
- Take care when buying products containing [button batteries](#), which can be seriously harmful if swallowed. RoSPA recommends that purchasers check that toys that require button batteries have a lockable battery compartment, which is required under the Toy Safety Regulations. The same is not legally required of other products such as remote controls, car keys, weighing scales (and many more) but RoSPA would still recommend that you conduct checks to make sure they are secure and undamaged.

For advice on preparing your home and other RoSPA Safety advice in preparation for Christmas, visit their website [here](#).

Government Safety Message on eBikes & eScooters

If you own an e-bike or e-scooter or are thinking of purchasing one for yourself or someone else, please take note of this Important Safety Message from the UK's national product regulator, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS).



E-bikes and e-scooters use large lithium-ion batteries which can present a risk of serious fire or explosion in certain circumstances. While these can be used safely, there have been a number of fire incidents involving lithium-ion batteries in e-bikes and e-scooters, including in conversion kits.

OPSS recommends you follow these five steps when purchasing, using or charging your e-bike or e-scooter to reduce fire risks:

- Step 1: **RESEARCH** – only BUY an e-bike, e-scooter, charger or battery from a known seller and check any product reviews
- Step 2: **READ** – always READ and FOLLOW

the manufacturer's instructions for charging and using e-bikes or e-scooters

- Step 3: **CHECK** – not all e-bike or e-scooter batteries and chargers are compatible or safe when used together. Check and only USE the manufacturer's recommended battery or charger

- Step 4: **CHARGE** – always charge in a safe place without blocking exits and always UNPLUG your charger when you have finished charging

Step 5: **NEVER** – attempt to modify or tamper with your battery

Graham Russell, Chief Executive of OPSS said:

"As the popularity of e-bikes and e-scooters increases we have seen more tragic fires in homes where e-bikes or e-scooters are charging. We are stepping up our actions to tackle the sale of unsafe e-bikes and e-scooters but it's important to remember that manufacturers only assure their e-bikes and e-scooters are safe when used in line with their instructions. I would urge consumers to follow these five steps to reduce risks to their families and homes."

Read more [here](#).

Scams & Fraud Guide for Older People

Anyone can be taken in by scammers as they grow ever more sophisticated in their tactics, but older people can be especially vulnerable.

Maybe you're a little longer in the tooth yourself or have older friends or relatives. Either way it's well worth checking out this new

Scams and Fraud Guide from the Cyber and Fraud Centre.

The guide aims to empower older adults to navigate the digital landscape safely and securely. It provides insights into common scams, identifies red flags to watch out for, and outlines steps to take in case of suspected fraud.

Access the Guide on the Cyber & Fraud Centre website [here](#).

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Communi-tree

The Neighbourhood Watch Scotland (NWS) festive campaign has been launched and aims to help you keep safe and well during the festivities, not just physically but mentally too.

Please click [here](#) to view the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Festive Communi-tree and please share it widely.

You can also download/read the NWS Festive newsletter, [Community Buzz](#), which is now available. Within you will find the Directors message, the NWS vision, updates and a list of festive events arranged that they will be attending over the coming weeks. Please note NWS events are subject to change, check their Facebook page for updates.



National Trauma Transformation Programme

A rebrand and new resources have been launched for the National Trauma Transformation Programme, which supports the Scottish Government and COSLA's shared ambition for a trauma-informed workforce and services across Scotland. This is a major and long-term change programme supporting the implementation of sustainable, trauma-informed, cultural and organisational change.

[Roadmap for Creating Trauma-Informed and Responsive Change: Guidance for Organisations, Systems and Workforces in Scotland](#). This new Roadmap is designed to be used flexibly and independently by services and organisations across all sectors of the workforce in Scotland, to help identify and reflect on progress, strengths and opportunities for embedding a trauma-informed and responsive approach across policy and practice.

our new learning reports, continuing to help us build our collective knowledge and understanding of how we can support a culture of trauma-informed and responsive practice across our systems and services in Scotland. All reports are available on the [NTTP Evidence and Impact page](#):

[Mapping of Professional Qualification Routes and Continuous Professional Learning Opportunities relating to Psychological Trauma in the Children and Families workforce](#)

[Trauma-Informed Maternity Services Pathfinders](#)

[Trauma-Informed Substance Use Services Pathfinders](#)

[Peer Support and Learning Group pilot - Adult Social Care](#)

These resources, and others, are all available on the newly rebranded NTTP website: www.traumatransformation.scot

Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhood - draft planning guidance: consultation analysis

A [public consultation](#) on the [Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhood: Draft Planning Guidance](#) ran between 27 April and 20 July 2023. The 10 consultation questions aimed to gather a broad range of public and stakeholder views on each element of the guidance. In total, 615 responses were received from 509 individuals and 106 organisations.

Organisations viewed the draft guidance positively, almost always rating it as somewhat or very helpful; however, many caveated their

support with requests for additional information. Many described the guidance as providing a good overview to understand local living and commented on its usefulness in setting out the broad characteristics of local living. Other prevalent themes included that the guidance was clear and helpful, that it set out the Scottish context and direction of travel well, and that there was a welcome focus on community engagement and the emphasis on the need for collaborative working.

However, there were repeated calls from individuals and organisations for more detail or examples to expand on the guidance and to help it be used in practice.

Read more [here](#).

Report praises council's vision and leadership

An independent report carried out by Audit Scotland on behalf of the Accounts Commission has commended North Lanarkshire Council's clear and ambitious vision.

The Audit Scotland: Best Value Thematic report considered the effectiveness of the leadership of the council's strategic priorities as part of a Scotland-wide approach of Best Value (BV) audit requirements. And auditors noted: The council has a clear ambitious vision as detailed in the Plan for North Lanarkshire which has been driven by effective leadership.

Read more [here](#).

Off track: Shadow report for the mid-term review of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration on drugs

The International Drug Policy Consortium has issued a scathing mid-way point assessment of progress on the United Nations 2019 Ministerial Declaration on Drugs.

Their mid term report says:

"The 2019 Ministerial Declaration on drugs laid down the main objectives of the international community in addressing the world drug situation for a 10-year period. Drawing on a broad range of data and evidence, as well as on the experience of civil society and communities, this report shows that by 2023

there has been little, incomplete or no progress in achieving these goals.

There is scant evidence that policies aimed at the prohibition and eradication of drugs have been effective in reducing illegal drug markets, or in tackling their connection with human insecurity, violence, and organised crime. At the same time, there is widespread proof that the punitive paradigm promoted by the global drug control regime has undermined some of the key aims of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration itself and of the broader UN system, including the promotion of health, human rights, and sustainable development."

Read the IDPC Report [here](#).

Consultation open on Draft Charter of Rights for people affected by substance use

As part of the IDENTIFICATION stage in the FAIR Model, the National Collaborative have issued a consultation on a [draft Charter of Rights](#) for people affected by substance use.

This consultation aims to capture people's views and opinions on the draft Charter of Rights, and inform its continued development.

A Facilitation Pack has been developed to support people to host conversations in their communities on the [draft Charter of Rights](#) and feedback their thoughts. This is available at the bottom of the page and contains the questions being asked to inform the further development of the Charter of Rights.

A small number of Small Grants of up to £250 are also being made available to support

people to host community conversations. More information on how to apply for these is available [here](#).

You can respond to this consultation by:

- Returning a completed feedback form to nationalcollaborative@gov.scot (available at the bottom of the page).
- Completing a digital [Smart Survey this link will take you away from The Alliance website](#) response.
- Getting in touch with nationalcollaborative@gov.scot to discuss other options of feeding back.

Individuals, groups, communities and organisations are all welcome to feed their thoughts in to this consultation.

This consultation will be open until 3 June 2024.

Suspected drug deaths in Scotland: July to September 2023

This quarterly report presents Police Scotland management information to provide an indication of current trends in suspected drug deaths in Scotland.

There were 900 suspected drug deaths during the first nine months of 2023, 13% (103) more than during the same period of 2022. After following a downward trend from early 2021 to late 2022, the rolling 12-month total of suspected drug deaths has increased over recent quarters.

There were 1,195 suspected drug deaths over the 12 months to September 2023, 10% (110) more than over the 12 months to September 2022. You can read more on this story on the Scottish Government website [here](#).



LATEST COMMUNITY SAFETY RESEARCH

Research

Estimating effects of short-term imprisonment on crime using random judge assignments

Noncustodial sanctions may present an attractive way to reduce the prison population rate, but only when noncustodial sanctions meet custodial ones in terms of deterring recidivism. Using administrative criminal records data of all individuals convicted in the Netherlands in 2012, this study examines the effects of short-term imprisonment versus noncustodial sanctions on crime.

Findings indicate that being sentenced to prison rather than a noncustodial sanction increases the prevalence of recidivism by 10 percentage points and increases recidivism rates by 1.07 registered crimes during a follow-up period of three years. Treatment effect heterogeneity analyses show that the detrimental impact of imprisonment is most pronounced for first-time prisoners, and adult offenders, compared to repeat prisoners and young adult offenders.

Read this study in Justice Quarterly [here](#).

Custodial Sanctions and Reoffending: A Meta-Analytic Review

Beginning in the 1970s, the United States began an experiment in mass imprisonment. Supporters argued that harsh punishments such as imprisonment reduce crime by deterring inmates from reoffending. Skeptics argued that imprisonment may have a criminogenic effect. The skeptics were right. Previous narrative reviews and meta-analyses concluded that the overall effect of imprisonment is null.

All sophisticated assessments of the research have independently reached the same conclusion. The null effect of custodial compared with noncustodial sanctions is considered a “criminological fact.” Incarceration cannot be justified on the grounds it affords public safety by decreasing recidivism. Prisons are unlikely to reduce reoffending unless they can be transformed into people-changing institutions on the basis of available evidence on what works organizationally to reform offenders.

Read more [here](#).

How to Successfully Engage a Community in Road Safety

Lack of community engagement in road safety issues has been a difficult barrier to achieving greater road safety outcomes. This project aimed to develop a road safety campaign that humanises cyclists. The project devised a four-step approach to develop and implement the campaign to engage the community and achieve positive outcomes.

The four steps were: 1) key stakeholder engagement, 2) community consultation, 3) campaign creation and delivery and, 4)

evaluation. As this project was conducted in 2020/2021, we address how we managed disruptions caused by COVID-19. Key findings show the campaign was successful and increased understanding of safe behaviours and positive influence on attitudes about cyclists.

The frameworks used for this project are provided and while the insights from this project apply to cyclist safety, the steps can be applied to improve collaborative projects to include community engagement in any area of road safety.

Download research [here](#).

Climate Crisis & Community Safety

"We can't have safer
communities without a
liveable climate."

CLIMATE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE WILL SUPPORT COUNCILS TO DELIVER LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION

The Climate Intelligence Service is a new programme designed to support local authorities to deliver local climate action and benefits for their communities.

Delivery of the Climate Intelligence Service will be led by the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute, a centre of excellence within the University of Edinburgh, and the Improvement Service, the go-to organisation for local government improvement in Scotland. This uniquely placed partnership brings together expert knowledge and key practitioner insights and will support councils and their partners to unlock the broader benefits of climate action for health, equality and resilience.

Both the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute and the Improvement Service have an impressive track record of successfully

supporting local authorities and have access to vast existing networks to engage stakeholders and progress actions.

Jointly funded by Scottish Government and local government, the Climate Intelligence Service will provide practical and tailored support to help councils build capacity and capability for the development of area-wide programmes of emissions reduction. The Climate Intelligence Service is designed to ensure local authorities have the data, confidence and capacity to support decision making in their local area which creates a more sustainable future for the community.

This support is vital to help allow councils to deliver their own area-wide net zero targets and to contribute to Scotland's national commitment to net zero by 2045 and will empower councils and their partners to unlock the broader benefits of climate action for health, equality and resilience.

Read more [here](#).

COP28 deal on fossil fuel phase out met with mixed reaction

Representatives from nearly 200 countries agreed at the COP28 climate summit to begin reducing global consumption of fossil fuels to avert the worst of climate change, seen by some as a major step toward the end of the age of fossil fuels.

The deal struck in Dubai after two weeks of hard-fought negotiations was meant to send a powerful signal to investors and policy-makers that the world is united in its desire to break with fossil fuels, something scientists say is the last best hope to stave off climate catastrophe.

However, the final text has been met with a mixed reaction, with representatives of small island nations criticising the deal as unambitious and former US Vice President Al Gore saying "The influence of petrostates is still evident in the half measures and loopholes included in the final agreement."

Some were more scathing, with UK climate scientist and author of 'Hothouse Earth' Professor Bill McGuire saying on X (formerly known as Twitter) "The COP28 final communique is nothing less than our civilisation's suicide note."

You can read the full COP28 agreement text [here](#).



Latest news from the Home Safety Scotland Forum

We're always on the lookout for new members to join our forum! If you work in or are interested in home safety, and would like to join or attend our forum, please contact Kevin Chase at kevin.chase@scsn.org.uk.

You can follow Home Safety Scotland on Twitter at [@HomeSafetyScot](https://twitter.com/HomeSafetyScot)

Home Safety Fund with Focus on Children's Safety Opens for Applications



The Mark McCall Home Safety Fund will award £3,000 to a single winning organisation delivering home safety outcomes for children anywhere in Scotland.

The Scottish Community Safety Network, Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and Fife Council are delighted to announce the Mark McCall Home Safety Fund will open for applications on the 1st December 2023. The fund is open to groups who deliver home safety outcomes for children under the age of 5 within a home setting anywhere in Scotland.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, there were 2,147 unintentional injuries of children under the age of 5 that required hospital admission (922 girls and 1,225 boys).

Research published by the Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN), as well as data shared by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), Public Health Scotland (PHS), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and others shows "falls are the second leading cause of deaths worldwide". Unintentional harm and injuries at home also include a tragic list of poisoning, choking, drowning, cuts, burns, strangulation and others. The young (under-fives) and elderly (over 65s) are most at risk, and 94% of accidental deaths take place in our most deprived communities.

As the cost-of-living crisis cuts deeper through communities, families and services access to essential safety equipment, support and resource is becoming far more limited, or unavailable.

Last year's winner, Jamie Burgess, Manager of Care and Repair Lanarkshire said:

"We were delighted to be announced as winners for the Mark McCall Fund in 2023. The fund we received allowed ourselves to deliver the 'Safe as Houses' initiative for under-fives in Lanarkshire installing home safety equipment in deprived communities. If you are looking for funding for a small project for child home safety, I would highly recommend this fund."

Speaking about the launch of the fund, Lorraine Gillies, Chief Executive Officer at the Scottish Community Safety Network, said:

"We are delighted to support the Mark McCall Fund for a second year with our partners at RoSPA and Fife Council. We are committed to enhance the legacy of home safety for children by using Mark's name, a passionate supporter of preventing child injuries in the home. We were delighted with the success of the previous winner, Care and Repair Lanarkshire, who targeted home safety within the most deprived communities in their area. The Mark McCall Home Safety Fund provides groups with an opportunity to apply for support for small projects across Scotland with a focus on home safety and the prevention of accidents in the home for children under the age of 5."

Find out more and apply [here](#).

Keep Babies & Small Children Safe from Drowning at Home - CAPT

A drowning child can't speak or control their arms. They slip quietly under the water. It's only in the movies they splash about and cry for help. It's a scary thought.

At home, younger children are most likely to drown in the bath or garden pond. It's important for parents to understand the risks of babies and young children being left alone, even for a moment. They may get no warning that something is wrong, as babies drown silently in as little as 5 cm of water.

While bath seats can be a useful tool in helping busy parents at bathtime, it's important to remember they're just a support, and NOT a safety device.

Think about your neighbours' gardens too – young children can wander off into them and drown in garden ponds, even if you don't think they have access.

Read more [here](#).

Child Death Review Data Release: Year ending 31 March 2023

The National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) published the Child Death Review Data Release for the year ending 31 March 2023.

The data in this report summarise the number of child deaths up to 31 March 2023 and the number of reviews of children whose death was reviewed by a Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) before that date.

It should be read in conjunction with data tables, where more detail is provided.

Read more [here](#).

Top tips on Electrical Fire Safety this Christmas

Amongst the twinkling fairy lights and Christmas cheer, it's crucial to stay safe with your loved ones. While TikTok hacks and Christmas-inspired decor can be tempting, how can you be sure you're doing it safely?



During the recent [Electrical Fire Safety Week](#), Electrical Fire Safety focussed on the potential risks involved around the home during the Christmas period. More importantly, offering their **top tips and safety advice** so you can stay safe with family and friends.

From overloaded sockets to dodgy fairy lights, Christmas can bring its share of electrical dangers. Whether you're cooking up a festive feast, or displaying your outdoor lights, it's important to stay safe and take steps to prevent potential electrical hazards.

Check out the Electrical Safety First top tips for a safe Christmas [here](#).



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